



U.S. Department of Justice

**Ronald C. Machen Jr.**  
*United States Attorney for the  
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center  
555 Fourth St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530*

---

## **PRESS RELEASE**

---

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday, May 6, 2011

### **For Information Contact:**

**Public Affairs**

(202) 252-6933

[http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc/Press\\_Releases/index.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc/Press_Releases/index.html)

## **Three Members of Violent Drug Ring Sentenced For Conspiracy and Murder in 2008 Slaying of Person They Viewed as a Witness - More Than 30 Shots Fired at Victim - - Judge Orders Prison Terms of 37, 42 and 48 Years -**

WASHINGTON - Three members of a violent drug conspiracy were sentenced today for conspiracy, first degree murder while armed with aggravating circumstances, obstruction of justice, and related firearms offenses stemming from a slaying of a man they mistakenly thought was a witness, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

The defendants, all of Washington, D.C., were convicted in March 2011 following a month-long trial in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. They were sentenced today by the Honorable Thomas J. Motley.

Javon Roberts, 33, the ringleader of the operation, was sentenced to a 48-year prison term. Shawn Curry, 23, one of two triggermen in the killing, was sentenced to 42 years of incarceration. Alonzo Marshall, 24, was sentenced to 37 years in prison. A fourth defendant, Michael Walters, 31, the other triggerman in the slaying, is to be sentenced May 13, 2011. He was convicted along with the other three men in the trial.

In sentencing the three men, Judge Motley noted that the victim, 25-year-old Michael Henry, was slain in August 2008 because the defendants "thought" he was cooperating with police. "That means no one is safe," the judge declared.

The evidence at trial established that the defendants operated a drug organization for a number of years in the area of 22<sup>nd</sup> and Savannah Streets SE, selling PCP, cocaine, marijuana and Ecstasy. The organization was set back significantly in August 2008 when members of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), after having received reliable information, executed a search warrant on the apartment from which the men operated.

In the weeks that followed the raid of the apartment, members of the drug organization tried to uncover the identity of the informant who provided the tip to the police.

These efforts were headed by Roberts, who, as multiple witnesses testified, “called the shots” of the organization. As a result of their investigation, the members of the drug conspiracy mistakenly concluded that the decedent, Michael Henry, had tipped off police.

Thus, on August 30, 2008, Marshall lured the decedent to the 3400 block of 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, where Walters and Curry were waiting to ambush him. Curry and Walters chased Henry through multiple courtyards in a residential area of Southeast Washington, D.C., shooting at him more than 30 times. Henry was struck twice by the gunfire and died on the scene.

Given the brazen nature of this crime, and the fact that the defendants made the community aware that the victim was murdered because he was believed to have cooperated with law enforcement officials, witnesses were slow to come forward. However, eventually a number of individuals came forward and put their trust in the criminal justice system.

“Gang violence continues to be a significant problem in this city,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “Today three violent drug dealers were removed from our city streets and will receive sentences of 37 to 48 years in prison. Their heinous conduct not only included poisoning the community with PCP and other drugs, but actually killing a young man whom they mistakenly believed had reported their crimes to the police. However, their efforts to intimidate were not successful. Today’s convictions were possible because courageous citizens came forward to testify against them and stand up for their communities.”

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen and Chief Lanier praised the outstanding efforts of members of the law enforcement community in bringing about the successful prosecution. Countless members of the MPD, the FBI’s Washington Field Office, and the U.S. Park Police worked tirelessly in their coordinated efforts. They included MPD Detectives Danny Whalen, Susan Blue, and Jeffrey Mayberry, as well as Officers Christopher Smith, Alvin Lytle, Dwayne Mitchell, and Natasha Pettus, along with U.S. Park Police Detective William Sepeck and the FBI.

U.S. Attorney Machen and Chief Lanier also commended the efforts of those at the U.S. Attorney’s Office who worked on the case, including intelligence analyst Lawrence Grasso; Litigation Specialist Leif Hickling; M. Laverne Forrest, Debra Cannon, Shawn Slade, and Katina Adams, of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit, and Paralegal Sharon Newman.

Finally, they praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Laura Bach and Seth Waxman, who investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Bach and Todd Gee, who tried the case.